

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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STEEL SHOT ZONES PROPOSED FOR NEXT FALL'S WATERFOWL SEASON

Steel shot zones for next fall's waterfowl hunting season were proposed today by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The proposed zones occur in portions of 29 States.

The proposal is part of a continuing effort to reduce lead poisoning in waterfowl. Birds frequently die of lead poisoning after eating spent lead shotgun pellets, which they mistake for seeds or grit. Steel shot is not toxic to waterfowl.

Areas are identified for steel shot use on the basis of high concentrations of lead shot deposited by waterfowl hunters and by the number of birds found to have eaten lead shot. About 20 percent of the waterfowl harvest in the United States occurs within the zones that have been proposed for the next waterfowl hunting season.

The proposed steel shot zones for next fall are identical to the zones designated for the 1979-80 waterfowl season. Detailed descriptions of the zones will be listed in press releases to be issued by the Service's six regional offices. The States in which the zones occur are as follows:

Atlantic Flyway--Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Virginia

Mississippi Flyway--Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Tennessee, and Wisconsin

Central Flyway-- Kansas, Nebraska, and Texas

Pacific Flyway-- Nevada, Oregon, and Washington

The proposal was published in the February 11, 1980, Federal Register. Public comments are invited and will be accepted until March 31, 1980. Comments should be addressed to the Director (MBMO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.